

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are pending. FIG. 3 is replaced with an amended version. Claims 1, 5, and 21-26 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in this or another application. Claims 2, 3, 6-9, and 11-20 are amended. Claims 2, 3, 8, 12, and 14-20 have been amended to correct dependency. Support for the amendments is found in the specification. No new matter is added. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 6, 7, 9-11, and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 2-4, 8, 12, and 14-20 also contain patentable subject matter.

Applicant has thoroughly reviewed the outstanding Office Action including the Examiner's remarks and the references cited therein. The following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action. All the pending claims at issue are believed to be patentable over the cited references. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Examiner objected to claims 6, 7, 9-11, and 13 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended claims 6, 7, 9, 11, and 13 to conform with the Examiner's requests. Applicants submit that claim 10, depending from claim 9, is allowable. In light of these amendments, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claims 6, 7, 9-11, and 13 be removed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 12, 14-19 and 21-26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,333,460 to Lewis *et al.* (hereinafter "Lewis").

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Applicants have canceled claims 1, 5, and 21-26, and have amended claims 2, 8, 12, and 14-19 to depend from allowable claims. In light of these amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 8, 12, and 14-19 are allowable.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Lewis in view of United States Patent No. 6,684,661 to Beasley *et al.* The Examiner further rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Lewis in view of United States Patent No. 3,799,249 to Linhardt. Applicants have amended claims 3 and 20 to depend from allowable claims. Applicants submit that claim 4, depending from claim 3, is allowable. In light of these amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3, 4, and 20 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe anything further is necessary to place the application in a better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at 202-861-1706.

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In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicant petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036.

Respectfully submitted,

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